



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Grand Canyon National Park

PO Box 129  
Grand Canyon, AZ 86023

928 638-7779 phone  
928 638-7609 fax  
[www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)

---

## Grand Canyon News Release

Release date: Immediate

Contact(s): Shannan Marcak  
Phone number: 928-638-7958  
Date: August 24, 2009

### **Improvements at the Grand Canyon Visitor Center and Mather Point in Grand Canyon National Park Continue to Progress**

**Grand Canyon, Ariz.** -- Construction on Phase I of the improvements called for in Grand Canyon National Park's South Rim Visitor Transportation Plan (SRVTP) continues to progress.

In late April of 2009, construction began on Phase I of the improvements outlined in the SRVTP. These improvements address problems associated with traffic congestion and significant parking shortages in and around Mather Point and the Grand Canyon Visitor Center (Visitor Center).

The Phase I improvements include:

- realignment of the South Entrance Road to loop around the Visitor Center area to the south and west;
- three new visitor parking lots which will provide parking for up to 600 vehicles; and
- a new parking lot which will provide parking for 40 commercial tour vehicles.

At this time, clearing and grading of the new South Entrance Road alignment as well as the new commercial vehicle parking area west of the Visitor Center have been completed. Paving, curbing and rock work in these areas is already underway.

It is anticipated that within the next three to six weeks, the transition of all traffic to the new road alignment will occur, necessitating a temporary closure of Mather Point to all vehicular traffic.

During the transition, all vehicles, private and commercial, heading into Grand Canyon Village will be diverted from the South Entrance Road onto an alternative route. Signs and flaggers will be used to direct traffic through the detour; and additional patrol rangers will assist with traffic management and assure that drivers maintain safe driving speeds throughout the route.

It is expected that parking in Grand Canyon Village during this temporary closure will be limited and visitors coming to the park during the transition should plan to park their vehicles upon arrival and take advantage of the park's free shuttle system.

---

#### **EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA**

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

This closure is expected to last three to four days and will not affect pedestrian access to Mather Point from the paved Rim Trail or the 0.2 mile paved walking path from the Visitor Center. Visitors are encouraged to take advantage of this brief opportunity to experience the vehicle-free Mather Point that will result once all of the improvements called for in the SRVTP are completed in late 2010.

The park's free shuttle system and commercial tour vehicles will continue to have access to the Grand Canyon Visitor Center throughout the transition. Commercial tour vehicles will be able to park in the new bus lot located west of the Visitor Center which will be accessed via the Yavapai Lodge road.

The exact dates of the transition will depend upon how quickly the current project work progresses and on the availability of the materials necessary to complete the transition. The National Park Service will provide as much advance notice as possible once the dates of the transition are known.

Funding for this project is being made available through entrance fees collected under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act.

Up-to-date information on this project will be posted on the park's web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/parkmgmt/cvip09.htm>. For additional information, you may call Vicky Stinson, Project Manager at 928-774-3026 or Shannan Marcak, Public Affairs Specialist at 928-638-7958.

-NPS-